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A  
SERMON

Preached at the  
**Anniversary Meeting**  
Of the SONS of  
**CLERGY-MEN,**  
In the Church of  
**S<sup>t</sup> Mary-le-Bow,**  
DECEMBER 4, 1684.

By FRANCIS *Lord Bishop of ELY,*  
*and PRESIDENT of the Society.*

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To the Right Worshipful the

# STEWARDS

Of the late

ANNIVERSARY MEETING

OF

## Clergy-Men's Sons.

And the rest of the

Governours of the Charity for Relief of the poor  
Widows and Children of Clergy-Men.

My most Honoured Friends,

**T***Hough I could heartily wish you had been pleased to reserve for some better occasion the just power you have with me, and that you had demanded some other proofs of the due regard I must have to all your motions, instead of obliging me to publish this very plain discourse, yet I should not make you a suitable return for all the Honour you have done me, should I obstinately refuse whatever you earnestly request; but whatever credit I may lose (if I have any to lose) I shall not think I have lost my labour, if I can persuade my Brethren of the House of Levi, to take special care that this Charity begin at home, this great Charity of Religious*

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## DEDICATION.

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ligious Education. *The best portion that any Parents can leave their Children, the only considerable Portion that many of the best Clergy-men can leave theirs; and one of the best Legacies they can leave this Corporation will be such well-bred Children, as will deserve that Character St. Paul bestows on Timothy, Who will naturally care for your state. For to make our Children as perfectly good Christians as they ought to be, will be the most effectual means to tie them fast to the Interests of this Body; the stiff abettors of the good Old Cause in Scotland, have ignorance and impudence enough to Christen their Children into the solemn League and Covenant (as if that were the Covenant of Grace, and so do some of them call it.) Let us show as much zeal and more according to knowledge, by bringing our Youth to keep their Baptismal Vow, and then they will never fail to Honour and Love the Church in which they were Born and Baptiz'd. But especially, Let all the Sons of Church-men be so well Tutor'd and Taught, that they may be secur'd and settled in this resolution, to live and dy true Sons of the Church of England.*

As I am one of the meanest of those Sons, so I am

My most Honoured Friends,

Your most faithfull and most  
humble Servant,

Fran. Ely.



A  
 SERMON  
 Preached before the  
 S O N S  
 O F T H E  
 CLERGY.

GENESIS XVIII. v. 19.

*For I know him, that he will Command his  
 Children and his Houshold after him,  
 and they shall keep the way of the Lord,  
 to do justice and judgment; that the Lord  
 may bring upon Abraham that which he  
 hath spoken of him.*

**T** Hese words are part of a great and  
 worthy Character which God was  
 pleased to give of Abraham, the Father  
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of the Faithful; who at his Hospitable Gate had newly entertain'd three Sacred Guests, whom though the Patriarch at first apprehended to be but Men, yet we may justly suppose they were more than Angels, for since one of them is all along styled the Lord, and since Abraham makes Addresses of Adoration and Prayer directly to him: Unless we could allow the Socinian Doctrine, That it were Lawful to Worship a Creature, and the Roman Doctrine of Praying to Angels: It seems at least piously credible that those who put on humane shapes to visit Abraham, had Divinity about them, and represented no less than the Three Adorable Persons of the Blessed Trinity (and therefore our Church reads this for the First Lesson upon Trinity Sunday.)

Socinon.  
l. 2. c. 4.

In memory of this Glorious Apparition to Abraham, one of the Church-Historians gives this account: That once every Year there was kept a Festival Day, where under the Doctor's Oak as they call'd it, where they suppos'd Abraham sate in the plains of Mamre, all Three Religions, Jews, Gentiles, and Christians, had a Customary meeting, where they offer'd Sacrifices to their God according to the different Rites

Rites and Ceremonies in use among them; untill the great Emperour *Constantine* prohibited any more of the *Jewish* or *Heathenish* Conventicles to be kept there, Commanded the Place to be purg'd, and order'd a *Christian Temple* to be erected, wherein only the followers of *Jesus*, as the true Children of *Abraham*, should be conven'd to Celebrate an *Holy Anniversary*: Such a Solemnity as this which our Gracious King hath Licens'd us to observe in memory of our Fathers; who Commanded us their Children as *Abraham* did his, to keep the way of the Lord: And, in Charity to their Widows and Orphans, to do good and distribute unto them, for with such Sacrifices God is pleas'd.

In the words may be easily observ'd these Four Parts.

1. First here is establisht the Duty and Authority of Parents to propagate true Religion to their Children, and the obligation of their Children to receive it from them: For the due exercise of that *Paternal Power*, and of this *Filial obedience*, is requir'd by Almighty God Respectively of both Parties, requir'd in the Persons of *Abraham* and his Descendants, that he should Command his Children and his

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Household

*Household after him to keep the way of the Lord.*

2. Secondly, here is a just and strong presumption, that especially such Fathers of Children as be also Fathers of the Church, will most effectually perform this important charge; and that the Children of such *Ecclesiastical Men*, will also most conscientiously do their part, to observe the Directions of their Parents and to follow their holy examples: This was a thing that God took for granted of Father *Abraham*, that he would take upon him to *Teach as one having Authority*, and that his Godly Dictates would be admitted by all whom he owns for his Sons. *I know that he will Command his Children, &c.*

3. Thirdly, here is the full extent of that duty which lies upon Parents and this upon Children, those to give and these to receive good Precepts, *that they should keep the way of the Lord*: And then that way is made plain before them, it opens it self into these two ways to *do Justice and Judgment*.

4. Fourthly, here is the ample recompense of doing these duties with extraordinary application; it shall derive a Temporal and Eternal Blessing upon the heads of such well governing

governing Parents, and such well-Disciplin'd Children; for these rewards are imply'd sufficiently by that promise *that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

1. Here is establish't the Duty and Authority of Parents to propagate true Religion to their Children; and the Obligation of their Children to receive it from them: For the due exercise of that *Paternal Power*, and this *Filial Obedience* is requir'd by Almighty God respectively of both Parties, requir'd in the Persons of *Abraham* and his Descendants, *that he should Command his Children and his Household after him to keep the way of the Lord.*

That all Parents have a *Commanding Power* over their Children is so certain, that the first and surest Foundation of *Government* was laid on *Paternal Right*. From God the great *King of all the Earth*, or from the Son of God, by whom *he made the World*, and by whom he governs it. From this Almighty King-maker, the first and greatest Monarch was the first Man, whom the Apostle styles *the Son of God*, and he was also the Father of all his Subjects.

Whoever.

Whoever the second was (and probably it was *Methuselah*, who liv'd some Centuries in *Adam's* Lifetime, and dyed immediately before the Flood) the Third was *Noah*, he that began again the Government of a New World. Then *Nimrod* the first Tyrant lift up himself; and then we hear of *Melchizedeck* a King and Priest to whom *Abraham* paid his Tithes: And so we come to *Abraham* himself: He was the chief and Head of the Holy Line, as I may call it; and what his Character was, appears from that Address the Children of *Heth* made to *Abraham*, *Hear us my Lord, thou art a Prince of God, or a mighty Prince among us*. Now though I grant, that Universal Monarchy was gone long before this; though I do not deny, that before this time, the Dispersion of Men, the Confusion of Languages, and the necessity of other Accidents had introduc'd some other forms of Government, as *Elective Monarchies*, *Aristocracies* and perhaps *Democracies* (which Governments where they are Lawfully settled and Establish'd must for Conscience-sake be obey'd) yet if we believe this Book of *Genesis* concerning the Original of humane Society, we cannot disbelieve this account that the  
Original

Original of such a Government as was necessary to support that Society, was grounded upon Paternity; and that *Abraham*, as the Father of his Family, exercis'd this Dominion to Command his Children, not only those Begotten of his own Body but those also Born in his House or within his Territories.

But then since the World it self was made by God with this great end and design that he might have a Church upon Earth; as *St. Paul* tells the Heathen *Athenians*, *Acts 17*. God hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men, to dwell on all the face of the Earth; and hath determin'd the times before appointed, and the Bounds of their Habitation, that they should seek the Lord, That is seek how to Worship and serve him: What more effectual means could be us'd, or what more natural method than that the same persons who brought us into the World should be oblig'd to bring us into the Church? and to qualify them for this great work of Evangelists, these two necessary things were provided for. First God declar'd his Will how he would be Worshipp'd and serv'd to our first Parents, and after them to the Patriarchs, to the intent (as the Patriarch *David* states it) that  
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when they came up they might *shew* their Children the same. And as he gave our Fore-Fathers such a Supernatural Revelation, as, if they would keep it safe, that would abundantly secure them from being Deceiv'd; so he gave all Parents such a Natural intense affection towards their Children, as made it hard for Parents to be the Deceivers of their own Children, in the most important of all concerns, That, upon which depended no less than Eternity. Upon this account the Commonwealth of Plato (whose notions some would fain be reviving) could be no Soil for Religion to grow in: For his Community of Wives destroys the Principles of <sup>social</sup> or Natural Love to the Children of their own Bowels; a Principle upon which is founded the greatest security (next to that of Gods promise to his Church) that Men will be faithful and careful in delivering to posterity any thing of true Religion. But to come home to my Text, when God renew'd his Covenant with Abraham, 'tis plain he trusted him as chief of a Chosen Family, with a Prophetick or Preaching, as well as Ruling Power: And the Priestly Office

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as well as that of Governour, together with the double Portion, was to be continued and settled upon his First Born; though upon the Transgression of Reuben, the Governing part was transferr'd to Judah, the Priesthood to Levi, and the Double Portion to Joseph. And, which is very remarkable, the Sign of this Covenant with Abraham, being Circumcision, a painful and Bloody Ceremony (as the Wife of Moses calls it; ) yet from Abraham to Moses, so many Hundred years, all the Numerous and almost innumerable Multitudes of the Children of Israel, were upon pain of Death, oblig'd to submit to the Knife, and to embrace the Religion of their Fore-Fathers, without any Written Rule of Faith afforded them, that we know of; yet they were bound by vertue of Tradition from their Fathers, concerning the Doctrine and Miracles which God vouchsaf'd to Abraham. This Parents Transmitted to Children and the Chiefs or Elders of Israel (for such we find there were when Moses was first sent to them) deliver'd to the lower or younger sort of God's people.

Yet I am far from asserting this Delivering of Religion from hand to hand downward

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from *Parents* to *Children* to be *always* the only means, or at any time the *Infallible* means, to keep the *Faith* whole and undefiled. I am well aware that from one sinful Generation to another, *Parents* and *Children* have so fail'd, they in delivering, and these in receiving that which God revealed of himself and his Divine Will, that *Idolatry* was all the Religion most Men had left them. I only alledge this to be ever indispensably the Duty, but I do not pretend it was constantly the Practice of Persons so neerly Related to one another. And the stiffest defenders of the *Oral-Tradition* way in the Church of *Rome* may be as easily refuted as were those *Sceptic Philosophers* that denied *Motion*, but had nothing to say when the *Cynic* rose up and walkt: so they who maintain it to be impossible, that ever their Faith should have chang'd, need only be shew'd how much they themselves have alter'd it; how they have sought out many *Inventions*, and this for one; as if their *Fathers* and *Mothers* (adding to them, if they please, their *Nurses* too) were the only *Guardians* even of the Christian Religion, and *Trustees* for the *Depositum* of the Faith; as if neither the *Scriptures* were able to make

make us wise unto Salvation, nor the Church Representative, or the *Priests Lips* could preserve Knowledge, saving Knowledge, nor propagate it so infallibly, as the familiar Colloquies of those who have so often turn'd it into *Old Wives Fables*.

But if the *Fathers of our Flesh* (as the Apostle calls them) are not to be altogether relyed upon; yet to go on to my Second part, 'tis to be hop'd such Fathers as be also *Spiritual Fathers*, will never fail in this duty of *Commanding their Children to keep the way of the Lord*. And that such *Instructors and Directors of the Tribe of Levi* shall never fail in the Church, that Gracious Promise or Prophecy is our abundant Security, *Thus saith the Lord, the Priests and Levites shall not want a Man before me. Jer. 33. 18.* parallel to that in *Isaiah cap. 30. ver. 20.* *Thy Teachers shall not be remov'd into Corners any more, but thine eye shall see thy Teachers, and farther explain'd by that Glorious Assurance to the Christian Church, Isaiah c. 59. v. ult. This is my Covenant with them saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee and my words that I have put in thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed, saith the*  
C 2 Lord,

Lord, from henceforth and for ever. The Sum of all which promises amounts to this; that the Church shall never be left without true and good Pastors, the supposition of that is contrary to the very Definition of a form'd Church, *Grege Pastori adunatus*; the Sheep shall never be depriv'd of a visible sufficient number of Faithful Shepherds, who shall make appear their Love to the great Shepherd of the Sheep, *the Bishop of our Souls*, by feeding his whole Flock; the small as well as the great, the younger and weaker as well as the older and stronger; for in the charge that Christ gave to St. Peter, a particular tender care is taken of *the Lambs*; especially for the use of these *the little Children*, as the Apostles call them, or *the Men of little Faith*, as Christ was pleas'd to call the Apostles themselves in their Novitiate or State of Pupillage; for such as these, I say, was design'd *the form of sound words*, as one Scripture calls it, or *the form of Doctrine* as in another place. If it be demanded what such a Form was; I answer, it was either the very same that we call *the Apostles Creed*, or at least some *Apostolick Creed*, some Compendious account of *the Catholick Faith*. And Isaac,  
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the heir of Promise, so long ago, was a kind of Catechumen, and the first of those meant in my Text. He was to be taught the sum of the Law deliver'd to Abraham in these few words, *Walk before me and be thou perfect*; and he was to learn the sum of the Gospel, from him that was also Taught it of God in this short Creed, and *in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be Blessed*. Men, Women, and Children are included in that Universal Grace; and if very Children of all Nations have any share in this Promise, then are they also within that Precept given by Christ to his Apostles, *go Teach and Baptize all Nations*: Not that of necessity they are to be instructed first and Christen'd afterwards; but *μαθητεύσατε*, that is, *make Disciples of them*, apply and enter them forthwith into the School of Christ; as Philip of Macedon upon the Birth of his Son Alexander presently said to Aristotle, *There's your Scholar*; as if he had said, *I Constitute you his Tutor*, from henceforth see him well order'd and instructed as he grows more and more capable of Institution. And if *Levit. 25*. Children are styl'd by Almighty God, *my Servants*; then why not as well *my Disciples*? by parity of reason this Religious

Religious Care of Instruction extends it self to those that are *Children in understanding*, as St. Paul stiles them. For as *there is a Child*; lay's the Prophet *Isaiah*, of a *Hundred years old*, that is, for the ripeness of his knowledge; so it follows there, *the Sinner of a Hundred years old shall be accursed*. And to deliver such from the Curse upon those that do *err from Gods Commandments*, as *David* speaks, to make them capable of the *Blessing* upon the true Genuine Children of *Abraham*, faithful good Christians; as this is the peculiar business of the *Tribe of Levi*, to do good unto all Men, so especially to those who may be stiled more peculiarly the *household of Faith*, for being of the house of *Levi*. For if St. Paul has stated it to his own Son, and Scholar *Timothy*, that if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, (where it means providing maintenance for their Bodily sustenance) he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an *Infidel*; Then a *Clergyman* is worst of all, that provides not well for the Souls of those descended from his own Loyns: And if every *Master of a Family* be in some sense a *Bishop in his own House*; then the *Elders* or *Governours* in the Church, if they

they would be counted worthy of the double Honour for Ruling well, must own a double obligation to Build up such in the most Holy Faith, to breed them up in the Nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The Duties of Teaching and Learning, being thus secur'd, next I proceed to settle the subject matter of such Divine Lectures; and so I am fallen upon my Third Part, the full extent of these Institutions, *that they should keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.*

And what is it first, *to keep the way of the Lord?* I answer in the words of the Apostle, *to hold the Mystery of the Faith in a pure Conscience.*

To some tender ears it sounds but harshly in the Creed we call the *Athanasian*, and it seems a hard saying, *which Faith except every one doe keep whole and undefil'd, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly*; and then again, *This is the Catholick Faith which except a Man believe faithfully he cannot be sav'd.* But this keeping the Faith supposes it first committed to any ones Custody; or, in the words of my Text, *this keeping the way of the Lord* supposes the sufficient knowledg of it to be first imparted; and so *Believing faithfully* presupposes a *Discovery and Delivery*; and



and therefore the Faith for which we are bound to contend earnestly, the Essential or necessary Faith, is justly call'd the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints. Wherever the Gospel is Preach'd, there of necessity must this Faith be deliver'd: So that in this sense we call it Necessary Faith, meaning that Doctrine which all Christian Pastors are oblig'd to Preach, and wo unto them if they Preach not that Gospel, or if they do Preach any other; That Doctrine which all the people that hear it Preach'd by these Pastors are oblig'd to admit; That way of the Lord which all Men are constantly to keep, when once they are shew'd it; and Commanded to walk in it. But this is none of their case of whom it may be truly said, *How should they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how should they hear without a Preacher?* What parts of Divine Revelation are so absolutely necessary, as none shall be sav'd without both *Hearing* of them and *Believing* them; what is so fundamental, is among the *Arcana Imperii*, the secrets of God's Kingdom; *levius est nescisse quam Errasse*; 'tis a less guilt (says St. Augustine) to be ignorant of the Truth, than to maintain a false Doctrine. Suppose that any of those Disciples that St. Paul found



found at *Ephesus*, those *Disciples* (for so they are styled for all their ignorance) that had not so much as heard whether there were any *Holy Ghost*: Suppose I say, that any of them had dyed in that State of Ignorance, and that Ignorance had been *Invincible*, or though a little *Culpable*, yet not *Criminal*, to whom little of knowledge was given, of them would little have been requir'd. The Church is far enough off from *Damning* such for not keeping that Faith of which no means was afforded to possess them. And since *Life and Immortality* are said to be brought to *Light in the Gospel*; which must suppose, that before, and under the *Law*, the *Fathers* were much in the dark concerning the *World to come*. Since 'tis the Character of the *Christian Faith* to consist of *Reveal'd Mysteries* that were hid from the beginning of the *World*; 'tis needless for us to set the bounds and limits of that necessary Faith which *Abraham* was oblig'd to Preach and his Children to hear. How explicit a belief of the *Holy Trinity*; How cleer a Notion of the *Resurrection of the Body*; What kind of *Messiah* was expected by the *Commonwealth of Israel* in those early days; is neither necessary, nor perhaps very possible

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for us at this distance to determine. 'Tis enough that God had shew'd them a way to Heaven by embracing such a *Faith* as well as by *doing such works*: And the *Spiritual Guides* in all Ages had the Office of crying after God's Faithful people, *This is the way, walk in it.*

But for the Practical parts of Piety which *Abraham* was to Command his Children, to do *Justice and Judgment*; (where *Justice* signifies *Beneficence* or *Mercy* being joyn'd with *Judgment*, and *Judgment* denotes *Integrity* without any fraud or deceit) these were *Innate Principles*, or parts of *Natural Religion* (as we call it) now it is truly said, *Naturalia Supponuntur in esse*; whatever is Natural to Mankind is suppos'd to be in all Men: But yet these qualities will prove but *half Vertues* in the best *Natures* without some *Gracious Education and Exercise*; 'tis certain they will rise higher, and be more *Heroic* in those who stand in the clearer Lights, to see the brighter Idea's of these Graces, and to view them in all their Glories. There is difference too in the obligations and just expectations upon several orders and degrees of Men in the Church. But the *Sons of Churchmen*, as better taught than others, ought to be  
*Leaders.*

*Leaders* of others, if not *Teachers*, nay *Teachers* in the best way of *Instructing*, by the uncontrollable Authority of *Exemplary* Living. But since to *do Justice and Judgment*, does, in few words, include the whole Duty of Man, which stretches out its Branches so far ; I shall extend my discourse but to these Two particulars, which ought to be the proper virtues, the special Characters, and as it were *the Badges* of all in this *Corporation*. Those two Particulars are.

1. First, Principles of Loyalty to the King and of Love to our Country.

2. Secondly, of Love to the Church, and of Charity to this Ecclesiastical Corporation. If other Virtues be with long practice acquir'd ; these two should be as it were born and bred with us.

And first we are in a special manner obliged to be eminently Loyal to our Prince, and to be truest Lovers of our Country. Of the former of these virtues *Abraham* could be no example, because he was no subject. His province was to Command and not to obey. For as *the Children of Heth* entitle him a Prince ; so the Son of *Syrach* goes yet farther, *Abraham*

was a Great Father of many Nations, in Glory was there none like unto him. Yet he left the Doctrine of Obedience, not only that obedience due to God, but that also due to himself, being a Prince as well as a Parent, establish'd by one of the noblest instances that ever was since the World began, except that great Exemplar of which the story of his offering up *Isaac* was a figure: He taught his Son, being then young and vigorous, able to bear the wood of the Burnt Offering, to submit his neck to the Burden: Then, to suffer his Aged Father who had power of Life and Death over him, to bind him, and lay him on the Altar upon the wood, to take the coming blow with open eyes, and all this without making any resistance. And then for Love to his Country, that which God had settled upon his Posterity, see how his care and concern extended as far as even to *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, which being Adjacent parts of that promis'd Inheritance, God Condescends, as it were, to ask his consent and permission, before he would execute vengeance upon them: And the Lord said, shall I hide from *Abraham* that thing which I do? But on the other side, how does *Abraham* Wrestle with God

to pluck them as Brands out of the Fire? With what humble Submission, and yet with what magnanimity does he gain his ground by steps, to bring his wicked and wretched neighbours within the reach of Omnipotent mercy? had there *been only Ten Righteous among them*, It might have been said of this great and good Patriot *Abraham*, as God himself was pleas'd to say of the Grandson *Jacob*, as a Prince hast thou Power with God and Men, and hast prevail'd. And these should be our Hereditary Qualities, Loyalty, and Love of our Country. Sedition and Faction are *ungodly* in any of the Sons of Men, but *unnatural* in a Clergyman's-Son. He should start at the very thought of being an *Incendiary*, while he has the Character of his *Father* in any Reverence: As *Cicero* when he produc'd in the Senate an Intercepted Letter from *Lentulus* to the Arch-Traytor *Catiline*, upon reviewing the Seal, and perceiving upon it the venerable Image of the *Grandfather* to *Lentulus*, an excellent good Old Patriot, the *Consul* seems to wonder the very sight of that face should not have recall'd and reclaim'd him from his base and cruel purposes, to principles of Honour and Kindness to his Native City.

City. But to be *Abhorrrers of such Associations* as our late *Catilines* made, is too little for Men so Born and so bred up, so well Instructed and Catechis'd as we are suppos'd to have been; 'Tis not enough for us to yield only *Passive Obedience* in such times of *Exigence*; We should be as forward as the formost to pay a vigorous *Active Obedience* especially to such a Prince as has done us the great Grace to make himself our *Founder*. For as it must be confess'd that never any Royal Family has better deserv'd the Title of *everlasting Benefactors to the Church*, which none of them ever diminish'd in the least *Priviledge*, but have all of them nobly confirm'd and greatly enlarg'd her *Charters*; so it must be thankfully acknowledg'd that towards us his Majesty has exceeded the Bounty of all his Glorious Progenitors. He has taken away our reproach, for the Church of Rome had made us a *Proverb*, as if the Son of a Priest were no better than *Filius Populi*, a Son of the People: But the King does sufficiently own us to have been *Legitimate*; and has in a manner undertaken to be himself our *Guardian*. And with great sense of Gratitude, you did but this time Twelvemonth at our solemn meeting,

meeting, Vote an *Address* worthy of your selves, wherein you have plighted your Faith to *Affert the Rights of this Hereditary Imperial Crown*, and this you did with the lowdeſt and joyfulleſt *Acclamations*.

And as we are moſt particularly and indiſpenſibly oblig'd to be zealouſly true and faithful to our Prince and Country; ſo in the ſecond place, we of all Mankind are moſt ſtrictly engag'd to be moſt unfeignedly and concernedly *Friends to the Church*. This was a Temper of mind which *Abraham* effectually *Commanded* and *Taught his Children*, when he diſcarded and expos'd one of them, that was *Iſmael*, for but making a *mock of Isaac*, whom the Apoſtle makes a Type of the Church; and repreſents that whole Tranſaction for a figure of ſuch as are *Born after the fleſh*, how they Perſecute ſuch as are *Born after the ſpirit*. For a *Mans* foes to be thoſe of his own houſhold is hard indeed: But that any of the Churches enemies ſhould be ſome of thoſe who came out of her own Bowels, is a great deal harder. If there be any ſuch, they are moſt properly call'd a *Generation of Vipers*.

But



But whatever he be in his Name, he is in his Nature an *Ismael*, a kind of *Wild Man*, who can put off the *most Natural* affection that the Son of a *Clergy-man* owes to the *Church*; which is something more than his spiritual Mother, and to whose tender care he belong'd, as soon as ever he came into *the world*. To call such a one a *Janizary* may be thought too much; and yet, considering some aggravating Circumstances, 'tis indeed too little; for those Children of Christian Parents are snatch'd from the breasts of their Mothers soon after they are Dedicated to God in the Blessed Laver of Regeneration, the wretched Infants; are worse than offer'd to *Moloch* who kill'd them presently; they are Consecrated to *Mahomet*, they are Educated in all the prejudices of Mahumetanism; which makes their Averfion to Christianity *much* their *misfortune*, though *very much* also their *fault*. But what excuse can be made to alleviate the guilt of one, brought up, not at the feet of *Gamaliel* as *Saul* was, but like *Timothy* bred up as it were by *St. Paul* himself, or by such as were followers of him as he was of *Christ*.

But



But on the other side, what a vast advantage may the Church derive from the kindness of so many Worthy and Excellent persons as make up this Solemn Assembly, who though very considerable in themselves, yet are few in number compar'd with the rest of our Brethren (as I take leave to stile them) dispers'd over these Three Kingdoms : Many whom God has bless'd, and who may prove a Blessing to very many. For though *Jacob* curs'd the wrath of *Simeon* and *Levi* ; yet it was also part of his Blessing upon them, and through them upon all the rest of *Abrahams* Children, *that he would divide the Tribe of Levi in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel* ; that so they might carry along with them his Benedictions, that they might dispense them far and near, that they might be themselves a common Blessing. So at this time are the Sons of the Sons of *Levi* in their several stations : So many wealthy Citizens, such as the *Book of Wisdom* describes in that Chapter where we find the praises of *Abraham* and his Children, *Men renown'd for their power, giving Counsel by their understanding, that is Men of business, excellent managers to make up your Court of Assistants,*  
E so

So many honourable Gentlemen and Noble Knights rais'd by their merits and services at Sea and Land, bound by their Order as well as by their Extraction, to protect your Widows and Orphans: So many *Clergy-men* of the Church of *England* to do their parts, and to make good that Plea for the *Marry'd Clergy*, that a great part of the *Clergy* of *England*, and among them some of the best of the *Clergy* are the Sons of the *Married Clergy*. Such a Corporation as this will bear up the Character given by the Apostle to the Church it self, as that is a Corporation, depending, as do all Christian Societies, and this for one, upon *Christ* the *Head*, from whom the whole Body fitly joyn'd together, and compacted by that which every joynt supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body. But this falls in with my fourth and last head of discourse (of which very briefly) the Blessings upon well-governing Parents, and well-disciplin'd Children, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that which he hath spoken of him.

And what is that? all Earthly and Heavenly, all bodily and spiritual, all temporal and eternal good things upon *Him* and *His*; especially  
*His*

*His by Adoption, His by Faith, any that follow His, and their Footsteps; His in Teaching Devotion, theirs in Learning it: All these shall be thus Blessed with Faithful Abraham.*

But if thus shall *his Seed be Bless'd with both hands, with the Blessing of the Left as well as the Right hand; how comes it to pass that so many of their miserable Orphans call for our help and Relief? How are Times chang'd since David made it his Observation, I have been young and now am old, yet saw I never the Righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging their Bread?*

But I answer, neither does *David* here suppose that it can never happen thus, but that it falls out rarely, *He never saw it.* He never saw the *Righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging their Bread, that is, he never saw them begging and quite forsaken, which must be repeated: That the Children of the Righteous should never beg their Bread, was no where promised the Jews themselves: They were not exempted from this as a Temporary evil, either for Tryal or for Punishment. They were not priviledg'd from being besieg'd in their Cities, nor yet from being driven out of their Native*  
E 2 Country;

Country; and *David* himself in the time of his Flight and Banishment was reduc'd to that extremity, as to ask and receive *the Shew-Bread* to keep himself and his followers from starving: But that *there should be none to pity or have Compassion upon the Fatherless Children or Widow*; that was the Curse on *Judas*; and *David* had never seen that heavy Curse fall on any Children of *Abraham*. 'Tis only upon such *Apostates* from the Faith, such as *Sin Treacherously*, the Psalmist lays such load, *Let the Runegates continue in scarceness*. I answer secondly, those promises of plenty and *eating the Fat of the Land*, must either be abated to us, or else spiritualiz'd to an Evangelical sense; they were more literally fullfil'd to that Carnal people the *Jews*, than must be expected by us *Christians*; our part is to be always dispos'd for Martyrdom; and God has never engag'd to Command that *these Stones shall be made Bread*, rather than any Son or Daughter of *Abraham* shall be starv'd into Heaven; no more than he has oblig'd himself, out of *these Stones* to raise up Children unto *Abraham*.

But for the better promises, *Those exceeding great and pretious Promises*, as the Apostle calls them,

them, *In thy Seed shall all the Families of the Earth be Bless'd; the multiplying of Abraham's Children like the Sand of the Sea, or the Stars of Heaven.* These *Benedictions* are in a manner appropriated to us *Christians*. *St. Augustine* presses the *Donatists* hard with these *Glorious Prophecies*, concerning the vast number of those that *should flock into the Church*, that its *Sons* should be innumerable; whereas they of that *Seet*, or indeed of any other, were a handfull of Men in comparison, how vainly soever they pretended to be the *Catholick Church*, upon which those unspeakable *Blessings* are entail'd and settled *to the end of the World*.

Enough, I hope, has been said of the great rewards in this *World*, and in that to come; for the *Righteous*, and those that *Teach their Children Righteousness*, to reinforce this obligation upon us, especially upon us the *Children of such Fathers* as were also our *Ghostly Fathers*. To call to mind the wise dictates, to revolve the memorable sayings, and to recollect the worthy Acts of such venerable *Guides*, is one of the best *Systems of Practicall Divinity* for our use. For if *St. Augustin* himself, the Night after his *Mother's Funeral*, could not help falling into most

most tender Passions, upon the remembrance of *Monica* his devout Mother, how many wearisome steps she had taken to follow his idle Progresses in his vicious youth, that she might recover *her lost sheep*, and bring him home to *Christ's Flock*; then what mighty powerfull effects will it work upon any one of us that had a pious *Churchman* to his Father, to reflect on his admonitions, such as for their Gravity and Piety might have become the mouth of *St. Austin* himself? Such a Reverend Spiritual Father, such a Saint has this whole Society lost in our late most worthy President. For how can I treat of this subject of reaching others to keep the way of the Lord, and treat of it before this Audience, without one word in Commemoration of that incomparable person, who with almost an incredible concurrence of Abilities both of mind and body, and with a most indefatigable industry; yet with all this was not more fitted to acquire all parts of Divine Learning, than he was apt to Teach: And being Dead he yet speaks, and Teaches us by his example; he perswades as powerfully as if *Abraham* himself had Commanded us as his Children; he Preaches more efficaciously, than if *Abraham* should

should send us a *Lazarus from the Dead*, to press Repentance and Holy Living. He exhorts us *not to be weary* (as he never was) *of well doing*, he charges us *to be* (as he was) *Stedfast, Unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour is not in vain in the Lord; To whom, &c.*

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F I N I S.

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